



USACR/Safety Center Reminds Soldiers to Drink Responsibly this St. Patrick's Day

Designate a Sober Driver Before the Party Begins

Fort Rucker, AL (March 10, 2009) - The U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center is joining the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) efforts to help keep our roads safe this St. Patrick's Day by encouraging Soldiers, Civilians and their Family Members to drink responsibly and designate a sober driver before heading to the local festivities or pub.

Over the past five years, our Army has lost three Soldiers on this holiday to motor vehicle crashes. According to the NHTSA, 851 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes over the five years, of which, 327 involved a drunk driver or motorcycle operator with a blood alcohol concentration of .08 or higher.

"St. Patrick's Day is a time to celebrate Irish heritage and gather with friends and Family, but it can quickly end in tragedy due to impaired driving," said Command Sgt. Maj. Tod Glidewell, command sgt. major for the USACR/Safety Center. "You wouldn't leave a buddy pinned down under enemy fire in Iraq, so don't leave a buddy pinned down sitting at the end of a bar in hometown America."

NHTSA recommends the following tips:

- Plan a safe way home before your celebrations begin;
- If you plan to get a ride home with someone else, designate a sober driver before any drinking begins;
- If you're impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation so you are sure to get home safely;
- Consider using your community's Sober Rides program
- If you happen to see a drunk driver on the road, don't hesitate to contact your local law enforcement;
- And remember, if you know someone who is about to drive or ride their motorcycle while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely.

"Driving while impaired or riding with someone who is impaired is not the right thing to do," said Glidewell. "If you plan on drinking, have a plan and designate a sober driver. Remember we are a Band of Brothers and Sisters, on and off the battlefield, and need to look after each other."

According to NHTSA research, impaired driving remains one of America's deadliest problems. In 2007, 12,998 people were killed in motor vehicle accidents that involved at least one driver or motorcycle operator with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher. To learn more, please visit www.StopImpairedDriving.org.